Ek-stasis:

DIONYSUS, NYMPHS AND SATYRS

ZOE SAMSARELOU - PIANO

divine art

DISC 1

Seduction

François Dandrieu (1682 - 1738)

1. 2ème Livre, 6ème Suite – La sirène 1:51

Déodat de Séverac (1834 - 1897)

2. Les Naïades et le Faune Indiscret 8:03

Dimitri Terzakis (born 1938)

3. Satyr und Naïaden (2005)* 6:39

Pathos

François Dandrieu (1668 - 1733)

4. 2ème Livre, 6ème Suite – La bacante 1:37

Paul Dukas (1865 - 1935)

5. La plainte, au loin, du faune *(Le Tombeau de Claude Débussy, 1920)* 4:59

Giorgos Koumendakis (1959 -)

6. From Tethys to the Mediterranean
(from the suite Mediterranean Desert, 1999) 5:03

Illusion

François Couperin (1668 - 1733)

7. Pièces de Clavecin, 23ème Ordre, Les Satyres 3:44

Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918)

8. Prélude à l' après-midi d' un faune *(piano transcription – Leonard Borwick)* 10:33

Lina Tonia (1985 -)

9. Prelude of a lost dream (2020)* 1:36

Metamorphosis

François Couperin (1668 - 1733)

10. Pièces de Clavecin, 4ème Ordre - Les Bacchanales – No. 1 Enjouements bachiques 2:03

Mischa Levitzki (1898 - 1941)

11. The enchanted nymph 5:58

Nikos Skalkottas (1904 - 1949)

12. Echo, AK 77 (1946) 3:45

Transcendence

François Couperin (1668 - 1733)

13. Pièces de Clavecin, 4ème Ordre - Les Bacchanales - No. 2 Tendresses bachiques 4:01
14. Pièces de Clavecin, 4ème Ordre - Les Bacchanales — No. 3 Fureurs bachiques 2:58

Florent Schmitt (1870 - 1958)

15. Mirages, Op. 70 — No.1 Et Pan, au fond des bles lunaires, s'accouda 7:26

Nestor Taylor (born 1963)

16. Erinyes (*from Huit Clos, 2017*) 1:42

Nikos Skalkottas (1904 - 1949)

17. Procession to Acheron, AK 79c (1948) 4:13

Total playing time 75:48

DISC 2

Instinct

Jean Philippe Rameau (1683 - 1764)

1. Pièces de clavecin, 3ème Livre: No. 8 Les cyclopes 3:31

Jules Massenet (1842 - 1912)

2. Bacchus — Le bapteme par le vin (*piano transcription Alice Pelliot*) 1:39

Sergei Bortkiewicz (1877 - 1952)

3. Trois Morceaux, Op. 24 — No. 2 Valse grotesque (Satyre) 3:48

Dimitri Terzakis

4. Ein Satyrspiel (2003) 3:24

Catharsis

Louis- Claude Daquin (1694 - 1772)

5. 1ère Suite, La ronde bachique 3:10

Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918)

Six epigraphies antiques

6. No. 1 Pour invoquer Pan, dieu du vent d'été 2:30
7. No.4 Pour la danseuse aux crotales 2:36

Dimitris Marangopoulos (1949 -)

8. Dionysus and the pirates, the voyage from Ikaria to Naxos (1998) 3:59

Mythos

Harry Farjeon (1878 - 1948)
Pictures from Greece Op. 13

9.	I.	The Dryads	1:54
10.	II.	The Fates	2:49
11.	III.	The Muses	1:55
12.	IV.	Mercury	1:15
13.	V.	The Graces	1:42
14.	VI.	The Naiads	2:54

Paradox

Paul Juón (1872 - 1940)
Satyre und Nymphen – 9 Miniaturen für klavier: Op. 18

15.	I.	Etude (Najaden im Quell)	3:15
16.	II.	Idylle (Pan mit der Syrinx)	4:13
17.	III.	Rêverie (Träumende Oreade)	4:50
18.	IV.	Intermezzo grotesque (Pan philosophiert)	2:37
19.	V.	Valse lente (Dryaden reigen im Mondschein)	4:34
20.	VI.	Elegie (Napaie in tiefer Betrübnis)	2:26
21.	VII.	Humoresque (Pan von Bacchus kommend)	1:46
22.	VIII.	Canzonetta (Liebeständelei)	1:32
23.	IX.	Scherzo (Nymphe fiehl! Schnell! Satyr hascht dich)	1:31

Transition

Aspasia Nasopoulou (born 1972)

24.		Krokeatis Lithos-Lakonia (*from "Row rocks", 2017*)*	5:09

Total playing time 67:13

Premiere recording

Ek-stasis

DIONYSUS, NYMPHS AND SATYRS

All references made to the god Dionysus are not only universal, but also concern modern society.

All the pieces presented in this compilation are directly related to the myth of Dionysus. It is worth mentioning that even though the composers were born in different times and are of different nationalities and cultures, we can find common elements in the way they reconstruct the myth into music.

The works have been arranged under titles, creating an interconnected narrative, each one taking us on a journey through the myth of Dionysus. It begins with the experience of *seduction*, advances to the state of *transcendence*, traverses into the realm of *mystical catharsis*, and finally, the *transition* from primal to civilization.

Dionysus and his companions are a *paradox*, which is apparent in the works, through the shift in the emotions, colours, and moods. Take the satyrs, they have their bright, cheerful side along with that which is dark, menacing and dangerous; the weight of fate with the lightness of existence; joy with futility; festivity with loneliness; reality with reverie; and, ultimately, life itself coexisting with death.

The youngest of the Olympian gods, Dionysus (Bacchus) had ardent supporters throughout the ancient Greek world, making his cult the most popular. Dionysus is the only Olympian god to have a permanent retinue - consisting of *Pan/Faunus* and the *satyrs*, the *maenads/bacchae* and the *nymphs* - a group with strong euphoric and spiritual cohesion. Dionysus is primarily the god of wine and the grapevine, of fertility and vegetation; the cycle of the seasons, irrationality and insanity, passion and *pathos*, darkness and *chaos*, emotions and *instincts*, death and rebirth; Dionysus is the only god who dies and resurrects. His worship is identified with mystical religious ecstasy/ *ek-stasis*, which means to stand outside oneself in order to experience union with the divine.

As early as the 13th century BCE, the Dionysian mysteries were celebrated mainly by women, who, despite being confined to domesticity and excluded from the social and political life of the city, would, for this special occasion, leave their homes for the mountains at night, and possessed by divine mania worship the god Dionysus.

Through their experience of violent emotional conflict, the initiates broke free from the bonds of reason and social restrictions, arriving at mental purification*/catharsis*. This unique process made them one with the god, bringing about their transformation *(metamorphosis)* into "*bacchae*".

The music of the aulos, the *syrinx*, the cymbals, the *crotala*, and the tympanon, coupled with frenzied, maniacal ritual dancing, and accompanied by joyous shouts and raucous cries induced a state of ecstasy in the worshipers, in order for them to reach liberation.

Four great festivals were celebrated in ancient Athens, signifying the importance of the worship of the god Dionysus. It is claimed that ancient drama originated in the late 6th century BCE, from the urban part of the festival of the Great Dionysia, where a chorus of boys and girls danced and chanted the dithyramb in honor of the god. It was at this time, also that two momentous innovations occurred: the invention of theatre and the establishment of democracy, both of which determined the political, social, and cultural evolution of humanity. Democracy emerged when, for the first time, all the citizens of Athens voted on the decisions taken, and theatre was created when a narrative was enacted by actors in a live stage performance. The theatre - the tradition of tragic and comic performance, one of the most complete forms of expression, combining speech, music and movement - was not merely entertainment for the audience; it raised fundamental questions about difficult life situations, and it portrayed actual historical events of Athens. The powerful force of the Dionysian influence is evident.

In "Bacchae", the tragedy written by Euripides in 407 BCE, the message is clear: any resistance to Dionysus will result in unpredictable, destructive behaviours, annihilating all social and moral boundaries; because Dionysus is human nature itself.

Greek Composers

Dimitri Terzakis (1938 -)
Ein Satyrspiel (**a Satyr play - 2003**) This piano composition represents a game played between Nymphs and a Satyr. The music expresses the satyr's aggressiveness and the teasing of the Nymphs.

Satyr und Naïaden (**Satyr and Naïads- 2005**):
The piece depicts a scene where a satyr is making erotic advances to the Naiads, who laugh at him and taunt him, as he has no hope of success on account of his comical hideousness. The scene becomes increasingly outrageous. After having sung a love song, the satyr goes into battle, where he tries to rape the naiads, but in vain. Ultimately, he is defeated and ends up exhausted and dejected.

Terzakis' compositions are firmly implanted in the Greek, as well as the Eastern Mediterranean musical cultures, which, through the years, he has cultivated into a musical expression that is uniquely his own. He builds his works on horizontal melodic lines, applying micro intervals which are smaller than semitones.

Giorgos Koumendakis (1959 -)
From Tethys to the Mediterranean (1999)
Tethys, mother of rivers and oceans. She was also believed to be an ancient sea which lay between the continental area of Afro-Eurasia, and whose remnant is the Mediterranean Sea, the cradle of many ancient civilisations. This piece belongs to the suite "*Mediterranean Desert*".

In his works, Koumendakis blends the styles of the Eastern Mediterranean, Byzantine and Greek traditional music, as well as combining elements of Western music, such as French baroque polyphony.

Lina Tonia (1985-)
Prelude of a lost dream (2020)
This short prelude is based on constant alternations between fast movements and small melodic patterns, like a floating between two different worlds, the world of dreams and that of reality.

Lina Tonia's music is characterised by the multiple ways she uses the timbres through the extended techniques of instruments, as well as the ability to keep a unity in music through the economy of musical thought.

Nikos Skalkottas (1904 - 1949)

Echo AK 77 (written between 1942 - 1946) is a short tonal dance, for piano, written on impulse to a set choreography during a rehearsal. Echo was a nymph of the forests and the springs. This piano work refers to one of the variations of the myth of Echo, of which the most well-known involve her love for Narcissus and for Pan. Echo's voice, which becomes more and more faint with every repetition, is the conclusion to each of her adventures. This diminishing sound is depicted in Skalkottas' piece from the very first chord.

Procession to Acheron AK 79c (written between 1942 - 1948) is a short modal composition, written for piano, perhaps as an accompaniment to a choreography. The river Acheron is the route to the Underworld, also known as Hades, the dark kingdom of the god Pluto.

Skalkottas, the most recognised Greek composer of the 20th century, wrote tonal and modal, as well as atonal and twelve-tone works. In all his compositions he incorporated elements of Greek folk music in a completely personal way.

Nestor Taylor (1963 -)

Erinyes (Furies - 2017) were three chthonic deities, known as the "Bacchae of Hades", who lived in the Underworld. They were the goddesses of vengeance and retribution, who also oversaw the implementation of the punishment imposed on the people by the judges of Hades.

This short piece belongs to the suite "*Huis Clos*". It is like seeing an image through a distorting lens. Likewise, one's consciousness may unexpectedly appear to play a game of chess with them, where instead of chess pawns there may be ghosts. By playing on this imaginary chessboard, the opportunity to face repressed and "tightly closed doors" arises, which eventually leads to a more substantial, reconciling relationship with one's self that ends with an unexpected checkmate. Compositionally, the deliberate expansion of expressive means is achieved mainly through the use of the extreme registers of the piano and the ostinato-like polychromatic layering.

Dimitris Marangopoulos (1949 -)
Dionysus and the pirates, the voyage from Ikaria to Naxos (1998).
The work is based on the myth where the god Dionysus, disguised as a rich, young man, was seized by pirates to be held for ransom, and the miracles that happened: the ropes the pirates tried to tie the god with kept slipping off his wrists, streams of abundant wine flowed throughout the ship, and the god transformed into a ferocious lion.

In the piece, the composer tries to strike a balance between the polarised concepts of spontaneity and organisation of every detail of the music. Marangopoulos wrote the original composition for a small student concert when he was 19. Later, it was published and recorded having been changed into numerous forms, including into a piece for church organ, which was performed at Westminster Cathedral.

Aspasia Nasopoulou (1972-)
Krokeatis Lithos/ Laconia (2017)
This piano work belongs to the suite "*Row Rocks*" and is inspired by the forces of nature and their constructions. Some fascinating mythological and geological events are related to the underground of Laconia in Greece. Large crystals of volcanic origin created under high pressure at a deep level inside the earth, are floating in a matrix of refined microcrystals, bursting unexpectedly onto the surface; the rock Krokeatis is born.

The human brain connects the unknown forces of nature and translates them consciously or unconsciously into beings. The passage from the very deep savage parts of the earth to the light are a metaphor for the passage to civilisation. The powerful Centaurs, as hybrid creatures, related to Satyrs and the meta-volcanic Krokeatis rocks seem to be mirroring each other.

Text : Zoe Samsarelou

Zoe Samsarelou - piano

Zoe Samsarelou studied the piano in Volos and at the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki, in Greece. She went on to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin and graduated from the Academy of Music and Theatre in Hamburg, Germany, under the guidance of Professor Marian Migdal. She attended courses at the International Salzburg Summer Academy with Professor Hans Leygraf, as well as with Professors Karl-Heinz Kämmerling and György Sebök in Berlin, and Julia and Konstantin Ganev in Thessaloniki.

Besides musical studies, Zoe Samsarelou has also graduated from the School of Archaeology at Aristotle University, Thessaloniki. She has always been interested in Mediterranean civilisations; in particular the ancient Greek world and its influence on musical compositions.

Inspired by Greek mythology, she has been giving themed recitals of unique compositions for piano over a number of decades. Notable examples include the piano recital within the context of the collaboration between the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki and the Louvre Museum under the title “Ancient Greek Philosophy and the Enlightenment”, and her latest appearance at the Festival des Forêts 2022 in Compiègne, France, in a performance titled “Apollon et Dionysos”.

Zoe’s repertoire consists of classical as well as contemporary compositions and works by Greek composers. She has given a great number of piano recitals and chamber music concerts in Greece and abroad. She has participated in festivals in Europe, Asia, and North Africa, (Greece, Germany, France, Italy, Malta, Turkey, Algeria, Egypt and Syria).

As a member of the Association “Echanges Culturels en Méditerranée” (E.CU.ME.), and as then president of its Greek counterpart, Zoe was very active as a pianist in Mediterranean countries. Additionally, she has performed at historical and iconic venues, such as the Library of Alexandria, the Opera House and the Arab Music Institute in Cairo, as well as the Public National Museum of Modern Art (MAMA) in Algiers, the Conservatorio Nicolò Paganini in Genoa and the Higher Institut of Music in Damascus.

A fervent believer in the power of music to unite, Zoe has collaborated with Turkish artists promoting Greek-Turkish friendship with performances across Greece and Turkey.

Her orchestral performances include solo appearances with orchestras in Greece and Turkey; she has broadcast on Greek National Radio and Television; and she has recorded a CD with works for solo piano composed by Astor Piazzolla with Arcadia Digital S.A.; and she has participated on the CD produced by the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki, which includes works by Greek composers.

Her extensive teaching experience coupled with her desire to promote and enhance a group spirit in young musicians, led to her establishing the “Krama Piano Ensemble” for many players at one or two instruments, which consists of performances by her and her graduate students. She has also given masterclasses at Conservatories and Music High Schools in Genoa, Damascus, and Istanbul.

In 2000, Zoe founded the “International PelionFestival”, which is a summer music festival and academy on Mount Pelion, Central Greece (www.pelionfestival.com), and has since been its Cultural Director. Zoe has taught at the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki as piano instructor, and since 1994 she has been a Professor in the Piano Department at the State Conservatory in Thessaloniki.

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